



190
~~BB~~ FTR

**Frank Contento, AARP Driver Safety Instructor
Statement in Support of S.B. 190
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
February 23, 2010**

Good Afternoon, Chairman Fontana, Chairman Crisco and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, I am Frank Contento, an AARP Driver Safety Instructor and resident of North Haven. I strongly support, S.B. 190, which will establish a four-hour driver safety course for older drivers that qualifies for the mandatory auto insurance discount.

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest classroom driver safety course designed especially for drivers age 50 and older to help people live more independently as they age. The AARP course covers the normal changes in vision, hearing and reaction time associated with aging and provides practical techniques on how to adjust to these changes. Participants also learn how to operate their vehicles more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment and also receive a thorough review of the "rules of the road," with an emphasis on safety strategies.

Currently, the AARP classroom course is available as an 8-hour course, typically taught in two 4-hour sessions, spanning 2 days. Thanks to members of this Committee, especially Chairmen Fontana and Crisco, the AARP Driver Safety course is also now available online and is self-paced and interactive.

S.B. 190 would build upon prior reforms and establish a concise, 4-hour classroom course that is more accessible and appealing to the active and busy lifestyles of today's course participants. Twenty-three other states already have a 4-hour driver safety course; in each of those states, the 4-hour course has directly increased the number of older drivers participating in driver safety courses. With your help Connecticut can join those states; we can reach more drivers and help ensure that older drivers have the practical tips and advice they need to drive safely.

Please support S.B. 190, An Act Concerning a Four-Hour Accident Prevention Course for Older Drivers. Thank you in advance for your consideration.